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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/582,982	07/10/2000	KATSUNORI ITOU	49657-742	4615

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EXAMINER

WILKINS III, HARRY D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1742

DATE MAILED: 05/21/2002

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/582,982

Applicant(s)

ITOU ET AL.

Examiner

Harry D Wilkins, III

Art Unit

1742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the corresponding address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 April 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1 and 2 are pending. Claim 1 has been amended.
2. The rejection under 35 USC 103 based on Nakamura et al and Applicant's admission of prior art has been withdrawn in view of the amendment to claim 1.
3. The rejection under 35 USC 103 based on Takata et al, Ochi et al and Applicant's admission of prior art has been withdrawn in view of the remarks filed 08 April 2002.
4. The new grounds of rejection are as follows.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takata et al (US 4,642,219) in view of Ochi et al (US 5,705,124) and Applicant's admission of prior art, and further in view of "High Carbon Chromium Bearing Steels".

Takata et al teach (see abstract) a bearing steel which contains, by weight, 0.7 to 1.1% C, 0.15 to 1.6% Si, 0.15 to 1.15% Mn, less than 0.010% P, less than 0.002% S, 0.5 to 1.6% Cr, less than 0.015% Al, less than 0.0015% Ti, less than 0.0006% O, less than 0.005% N and the balance iron.

Takata et al do not teach that the bearing steel contains 0.1 to 3.0% Ni.

Ochi et al teaches a bearing steel that is similar in composition to the bearing steel of Takata et al. Ochi et al teach (see col 5, lines 14-23) that Ni can be added at 0.1 to 2.0% to bearing steels for the purpose of improving the hardenability and extending the life of the bearing steel.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have added Ni as taught by Ochi et al to the bearing steel of Takata et al because Ochi et al teach that Ni improves hardenability and extends the life of bearing steels.

The claim is directed to a "part" of an antifriction bearing having an inner ring, an outer ring and a rolling element. Takata et al in view of Ochi et al do not expressly teach that the steel is used as a part of an antifriction bearing, however, the bearing steel of Takata et al in view of Ochi et al would have been expected by one of ordinary skill in the art to have antifriction properties (see Habrovec et al, described below) and, thus, be made into an antifriction bearing.

Takata et al teach (see col 5, lines 3-9) that the bearing steel is quench hardened and then tempered at 170°C. Thus, Takata et al do not teach that the bearing is tempered at 180 to 350°C.

However, Applicant admits as prior art (see page 2, lines 7-12) that it was well known in the art to perform a high temperature tempering (300°C) on high temperature use bearing steels that have been quench hardened, such as SUJ2 or the like, or carbonitrided, such as SCM 420 or SNCM 815, in order to attain dimensional stability.

"High Carbon Chromium Bearing Steels" at page 1, in Table 2, describes the standard Japanese steel "SUJ2". SUJ2 steel has a composition that is very similar to

the composition disclosed by Takata et al. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would have expected the bearing steel of Takata et al to have properties similar to SUJ2 steel.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have used the bearing steel of Takata et al in a high-temperature bearing because the similar steel SUJ2 had been known to be used in high-temperature bearings and SUJ2 steel and the steel of Takata et al have similar properties.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have applied the conventional processing step of high-temperature tempering after quench hardening or carbonitriding to the bearing steel of Takata et al in view of Ochi et al because the high-temperature tempering aids the bearing in dimensional stability.

The claim states "having a structure subjected to tempering after quench hardening or carbonitriding, wherein the hardness after said tempering is at least HRC 58 when tempered at a temperature in a range of 180°C to 350°C and the maximum carbide size is not more than 8 μm ". Takata et al teach (see Table 2) that the non-metallic inclusions (i.e.-oxides, nitrides, carbides) have average length of 1.0 μm for the inventive examples. With respect to the property of hardness, the alloy composition taught by Takata et al in view of Ochi et al overlaps the alloy composition recited in the claims and the processing method of Takata et al in view of Applicant's admission of prior art and "High Carbon Chromium Bearing Steels" is identical to the process recited in the claims, and, therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have expected that the products taught by the references would have the same hardness as claimed.

Regarding claim 2, Takata et al teach (see abstract) optionally adding 0.05 to 0.50% Mo and 0.05 to 0.30% V.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-2 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Habrovec et al (US 3,859,146) teach a steel composition for anti-friction bearings. Habrovec et al teach (see col 1, lines 13-17) that anti-friction bearings are generally made from an overeutectoid chromium steel. The composition is within the limits of the SUJ2 standard steel. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have expected the steel of Takata et al in view of Ochi et al to inherently possess antifriction properties.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Harry D Wilkins, III whose telephone number is 703-305-9927. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30am-4:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy V King can be reached on 703-308-1146. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Art Unit: 1742

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.

Harry D Wilkins, III
Examiner
Art Unit 1742

hdw
May 20, 2002


ROY KING
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700